



PRIME MINISTER

10.12.1999

Mr. Prime Minister,

Today, the European Union has set out on a new course in its relations with the Republic of Turkey. I am very pleased to inform you officially on our unanimous decision to confer Turkey the status of candidate State, on the same footing as any other candidate.

When, in the European Council, we discussed the draft conclusions annexed to this letter, I said, without been challenged, that in § 12 of the conclusions there was no new criteria added to those of Copenhagen and that the reference to § 4 and 9a was not in relation with the criteria for accession but only to the political dialogue. The accession partnership will be drawn up on the basis of today's Council decisions.

In § 4 the date of 2004 is not a deadline for the settlement of disputes through the ICJ but the date at which the European Council will review the situation relating to any outstanding dispute.

Regarding Cyprus, a political settlement remains the aim of the EU. Concerning the accession of Cyprus, all relevant factors will be taken into account when the Council takes the decision.

In the light of this, I invite you with the other candidate States to our working lunch in Helsinki tomorrow.


Paavo Lipponen

Prime Minister Bülent ECEVIT
Ankara, Turkey